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AMULET IN FORM OF THE DRAGON-HORSE  
CHOU DYNASTY(?), 1122 B. C. — 249 A. D.

### TOMB JADES

THE importance which attaches to Jade in the general sum of Chinese culture, the natural beauty of the different forms of Jadeite and Nephrite, the great artistic value of the carving, and the historical development of the art, have all been shown in the admirable large publication by Buchel and others on the Jade collection formed by the late Heber R. Bishop. This collection, which was one of the first prizes of the Museum, is still by far the best of its kind in any public gallery, but at the time when Mr. Bishop was gathering his pieces little was known of the treasures of the Han and still earlier periods which recent years have brought to light in the tombs. The greater part of the thousand jade objects in the Bishop Collection are works of the Kang-Hsi and Chien Lung periods, to which time belong also nearly all the elaborate pieces at present found on the market, although these are often wrongly attributed to earlier dynasties. Only about forty pieces in the Bishop Collection belong to a time before Ming, but among them are such important things as the chariot wheel and the large gong. The gift of Mr. Samuel T. Peters of a collection of 280 tomb jades which have recently been gathered together in Japan is therefore a most welcome addition to the possessions of the Museum, supplementing the Bishop Collection in an admirable way.

Nearly all of the pieces in Mr. Peters' gift are of small size, most of them being amulets and charms of the sort which

the Chinese still wear in little bags of bran placed in their sleeves. This amulet, which has been recovered from some ancient tomb, is taken out and rubbed with the fingers and the bran to impart to the stone the coveted high polish. Such pieces are greatly appreciated as bringing luck and warding off disease, and are easily distinguished from the pure colors of ordinary jade, cream white, clear yellow, and unspotted green, by the brown stains which invariably mark the tomb jade. Jade assumes this color only after centuries of burial in the earth. A special name has been given to such pieces, *Han-jue*, referring to the ancient custom of putting a bit of jade in the mouth of the dead before burial, *Han* meaning held in the mouth and *jue* jade.

The dating of these pieces is a very difficult matter, but it may be said that none is later than the Sung period. Several forms, such as the bracelets, the thumb-rings used by the archers, the axes, and celts, are so similar to European objects of prehistoric times that it seems probable that both are of equally remote date. The ornamented jades, especially the ones with coiling dragons and simple geometrical designs, show a strong resemblance to bronzes of the Chou and Han periods. The uses of these objects are manifold; besides bracelets and rings we find shapes imitating gongs and bells, sacrificial instruments used in the temples, tablets of high officials, and state costume pendants and ornaments. The manner of using such pendants is shown in the famous tomb reliefs in the province of Shan-Tung, where the Wu-ti, or Five Rulers, the followers of the first three legendary sovereigns, are represented wearing square-topped hats with jade ornaments very similar to many in Mr. Peters' collection.

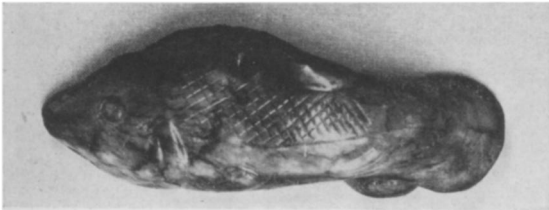
The most charming pieces from an artistic point of view are, perhaps, the different types of animals — fishes, hares, birds, and elephants — all modeled from simple cufic forms and showing conventions similar to those in works of the early Middle Ages in Europe, but already indicating the establishment of Chinese types. A number of these jades represent in one



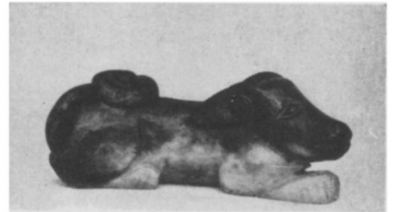
CHARM IN FORM OF A LION  
HAN DYNASTY, 206 B. C. — 221 A. D.



BRACELET, ORNAMENTED WITH FIGHTING DRAGONS  
HAN DYNASTY, 206 B. C. — 221 A. D.



AMULET IN FORM OF A FISH  
CHOU DYNASTY(?), 1122 B. C. — 249 A. D.



AMULET IN FORM OF A DOG  
CHOU DYNASTY(?), 1122 B. C.—249 A. D.



BRACELET, WITH ARCHAIC INSCRIPTION  
HAN DYNASTY, AND EARLIER

of its oldest forms the Dragon-Horse which is also found so often throughout Chinese art. In these, the head of the horse is turned backward, in reference to the ancient legend of Fu-Hsi, the first ruler of China, to whom the eight trigrams, symbols of mystic philosophy, were re-

collections and sometimes not duly appreciated in our Western world. To enjoy Chinese painting, as a recent critic has said, "The Westerner must forget his own mental preconceptions and must throw over his artistic education, every critical tradition, and all the æsthetic baggage that has



DETAIL FROM CHINESE PAINTING

vealed by the Dragon-Horse rising from the water of the Yellow River holding on its back a scroll engraved with the sacred signs.

Mr. Peters' gift embraces practically all the known types of tomb-jade amulets and is a valuable addition to the Museum's already unique collection of jade.

W. R. V.

#### CHINESE PAINTING

THE recent purchase of a Chinese painting, entitled *Ts'ing-ming-shang-ho-t'u* (A Trip up the River on the Feast of Tombs),<sup>1</sup> gives opportunity for a brief account of an art but poorly represented in the Museum

accumulated from the Renaissance to our own days." To judge Chinese art by Occidental standards is sure to lead to error, for the points of view of the two differ essentially.

Chinese painting is characterized by a marked graphic quality. A Chinese painter must be a good draughtsman. Beauty and expressiveness of line are achieved rather than the representation of solidity. In all periods the Chinese have revealed in their works an intuitive feeling for color, both sure and delicate. Though ignorant of the laws of chiaroscuro, they have occasionally produced works that show a mastery of the most delicate effects of light and shade. In landscape-painting they express a passionate love for nature and a power to interpret her moods that is unexcelled.

The pictorial art of China has been devel-

<sup>1</sup>For the translation of the title and the attribution given later, we are indebted to Prof. Friedrich Hirth of Columbia College.